

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Reconsideration of this application in light of the above amendments and following comments is courteously solicited.

Initially, it should be noted that when the instant RCE application was filed a petition was submitted requesting suspension of any action by the Patent Office for a period of three months. It is noted that the examiner issued an office action during the period in which the suspension of action was requested.

The present invention consists of three separate and distinct patentable features as follows:

- (a) "the rotating unit consists of a transparent disk member having a vertical axis and rotates in a plane perpendicular to the vertical axis of the disk member"
- (b) "the rotating unit has a flat surface which rolls rolling bodies supplied thereon"
- (c) "a return wall for returning the rolling bodies which has not been caught by the catching units". This return wall is provided around a plurality of catching unit, and "accelerates the rolling body and returns the accelerated rolling body".

The above feature a) is supported by claims 1 to 29. The above feature b) is supported by claims 36 to 41. The above feature c) is supported by claims 11, 12, and 42 to 47.

With regard to the patentable feature (a) recited in claims 1-29, the criticality of this feature is as follows:

Since the rotating unit is symmetrical with regard to its vertical rotating axis, by constructing the rotating unit a transparent disk member, the player is not easily recognizable the rotation of the rotating unit. In this regard, a rolling body provided on the surface of the rotating unit moves toward the outer periphery of the rotating unit in roughly spiral fashion due to an interaction with inertial force which is not related with the rotation of the rotating body, a frictional force between the rotating unit, and a centrifugal force due to rotation with the rotating unit. The player can not find the reason why the rolling body travels so since the rotation of the rotating unit is not easily recognized by the player as above, and this highly enhances entertainment when playing with this apparatus.

With regard to the patentable feature (b) recited in claims 36-41, the criticality of the feature is as follows:

When the rolling body moves in roughly spiral fashion toward the outer periphery of the rotating unit, the rolling body takes vagal or erratic course on the surface of the rotating unit during the rolling body is in central portion of the rolling body, and this highly enhances entertainment when playing with this apparatus.

With regard to the feature patentable (c) recited in claims 11, 12 and 42-47, the criticality of the feature is as follows: The return wall functions for returning the rolling body to the rotating unit, thereby causing the complicated movement of the rolling body. This enhances the entertainment of the game.

The invention having feature (a), claims 1-29, is not taught or rendered obvious by the prior art. The invention according to claims 1, 5, 14, 19 includes the limitation of "a rotating unit having a surface which rolls rolling bodies supplied thereon, wherein the rotating unit consists of a transparent disk member having a vertical axis, said rotating unit rotates in a plane perpendicular to the vertical axis of the disk member". In this regard, since the rotating unit is symmetrical with regard to its vertical rotating axis, by constructing the rotating unit a transparent disk member, the player is not easily recognizable the rotation of the rotating unit. In this regard, a rolling body provided on the surface of the rotating unit moves toward the outer periphery of the rotating unit in roughly spiral fashion due to an interaction with inertial force which is not related with the rotation of the rotating body, a frictional force between the rotating unit, a centrifugal force due to rotation with the rotating unit. The player can not find the reason why the rolling body travels so since the rotation of the rotating unit is not easily recognized

by the player as above, and this highly enhances entertainment when playing with this apparatus. Such construction is not disclosed in the references cited by the Examiner, and above effect can never obtained by the references whether taken alone or in combination.

The examiner stated in the office action that Kaneko et al (US 5,879,235) teaches "a transparent disk having a photographic or decorative backing. See Fig. 1(3), 8, 9; col.2:24-67" (line 1 on page 2 of DETAILED ACTION. However, the "large-sized picture surface" formed at the central space of the rotary disk of the ball game machine of Kaneko is fixed and does not rotate, and no description or suggestion regarding that the "large-sized picture surface is transparent" exists in Figs. 1, 8 and 9 and col.2: 24-67 in the Kaneko. Further, no rolling body such as a ball rotates on the "large-sized picture surface" in Kaneko.

As above, in Kaneko, only the rotary disk provided around the "large-sized picture surface" rotates, and the ball is provided on the rotary disk and rotates on the rotary disk. In other words, the ball is provided from outer circumference, and the ball moves only circumferentially and does not move on the central portion of the rotary disk. In the present invention according to claims 1, 5, 14, 19, the ball is moved from central portion to outer portion. Accordingly, the game machine of Kaneko is basically different from the present invention

according to claims 1, 5, 14, 19, and Kaneko does not teach or suggest the limitation of "a rotating unit having a surface which rolls rolling bodies supplied thereon, wherein the rotating unit consists of a transparent disk member having a vertical axis, said rotating unit rotates in a plane perpendicular to the vertical axis of the disk member" of the present invention.

The invention having feature (b), claims 36-41, is not taught by the prior art. The inventions according to claims 36 to 41 include the limitation of "a rotating unit having a surface which rolls rolling bodies supplied thereon, said rotating unit rotates in a plane perpendicular to the vertical axis of the disk member, wherein said surface is flat".

When the rolling body moves in roughly spiral fashion toward the outer periphery of the rotating unit, the rolling body takes vagal or erratic course on the surface of the rotating unit during the rolling body is in central portion of the rolling body, and this highly enhances entertainment when playing with this apparatus. This is caused by the following reasons.

- 1) When the rolling body is provided on the surface of the rotating unit at the central portion of the surface, the rolling body less moves since the inertial force prevails the frictional force, and the rolling body begins

to rotate due to the frictional force. In this state, no centrifugal force is generated on the rolling body.

2) When the rolling body moves circumferentially to a little distance, the rolling body takes vagal or erratic course due to the change of the direction of rotation thereof. Further, the centrifugal force is generated due to the movement in the circumferential direction, and this causes the rolling body to move not only in the circumferential direction but also in the tangential direction.

3) When the rolling body gets away from the center of the rotating unit, the direction of frictional force on the rolling body be maintained virtually constant. In this state, the rolling body moves circumferentially since frictional force exceeds the inertial force, thereby the centrifugal force acts larger on the rolling body and the rolling body moves not circumferentially but tangentially and will moves out of the rotating unit. At this stage, the rolling body takes no vagal or erratic course.

In this regard, Rothen (US 2,001,500) discloses a game device comprising a circular shaped large game board (fixed) and a smaller disk (rotatable) provided on the game board, and a spiral wall is provided on the smaller disk. The game device of

Rothen having the spiral way, the balls on the smaller disk moves just along a spiral passage defined by the spiral way when the smaller disk rotates. Accordingly, the above effect of the present invention according to claims 36 to 41 can never obtained by Rothen.

Further, in claims 30 to 35, the another feature of "wherein said number drawing apparatus is a bingo game machine, and further comprising indicator units corresponding to different symbols for emitting light directed at a player who has only to one more number to reach bingo, each indicator unit informs each player of this fact and symbols indicating bingo" is added for each of the main claims 1, 5, 14, 19, 20, 21. This construction is disclosed in lines 8 to 15 o page 8 of the original specification. Furthermore, this construction is not disclosed or suggested in the cited references.

Finally, the invention having feature (c), claims 11, 12 and 42-47, is not taught by the prior art. The return wall as claimed functions for returning the rolling body to the rotating unit, thereby causing a complicated movement of the rolling ball. This complicated movement which is a function of the return wall enhances the entertainment value of the game. This particular feature is not shown or disclosed in the prior art references.

In light of the foregoing, it is submitted that all of the claims as pending patentably define over the art of record and an early indication of same is respectfully requested.


An earnest and thorough attempt has been made by the undersigned to resolve the outstanding issues in this case and place same in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions or feels that a telephone or personal interview would be helpful in resolving any outstanding issues which remain in this application after consideration of this amendment, the Examiner is courteously invited to telephone the undersigned and the same would be gratefully appreciated.

It is submitted that the claims as amended herein patentably define over the art relied on by the Examiner and early allowance of same is courteously solicited.

If any fees are required in connection with this case, it
is respectfully requested that they be charged to Deposit
Account No. 02-0184.

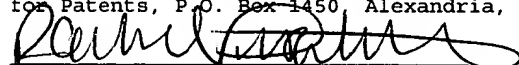
Respectfully submitted,

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Date: May 26, 2004

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal
Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to: "Commissioner
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